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ABSTRACT

This study investigates job mobility of men and women psychologists in the southeast. The sample consisted of 300 male and female regular members of the Southeastern Psychological Association whose names were taken from the 1972 membership list. Each person in the sample was sent a one-page questionnaire which asked for the date of their doctorate or terminal degree, the area of specialization within psychology and for a chronological listing of all the jobs held since the terminal degree was obtained. There was a 47% return, with 72 females responding and 74 of the males. Results indicated: (1) more men had the doctorate degree than women; (2) while both sexes specialized in an applied area more often than a basic area, this differential tendency was greater for women; (3) women were more often employed by agencies than men; (4) the mobility of men and women was not significantly different; (5) the level of highest position reported differed by sex. Men achieved the rank of full professor more often than women; and (6) men more often than women reported changing jobs in order to achieve professional advancement, or because of job dissatisfaction. (MJM)

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JOB MOBILITY OF MEN AND WOMEN PSYCHOLOGISTS IN THE SOUTHEAST

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One of the most frequently given reasons for not recruiting or hiring women is that they are less likely to remain in their positions. A Labor Department survey of personnel managers from 127 companies found that this reason was ranked 2nd of all reasons offered. The present survey was conducted in order to answer empirically the question, "Are women a bad risk?" That is, is the turnover rate of women in psychology greater than that for men?

Studies which compare the mobility of men and women often yield conflicting results. Although the majority of these show small differences between the sexes, with women slightly less mobile than men, at least one study found the turnover rate for females 2-1/2 times greater than that of the males. However, when such variables as the age of the employee, the skill level of the job and the length of service with an employer are held constant, it has generally been found that women workers are more likely to remain in their jobs than men. (U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, Women as Workers, 1972). It is interesting to note that for women, occupational mobility is not dependent on marital status or race, but is correlated with educational level such that both low (less than 8 years) and high (B.A. or more) levels of schooling are associated with greater stability.

Among professional and technical workers, occupation changing rates are low in general, but twice as high for men (6% per year change their jobs) as for women (3% per year). In a study conducted at the University of South Florida covering the five year period 1965-1970, it was found that, on the average, 8.1% of its faculty left each year. Female faculty, slightly but not significantly, were less likely to leave than male. Similarly, the average years spent at USF were computed for its 40 women holders of the doctorate degree (in all disciplines) and for a matched sample of male doctorates. It was found that the average tenure of the group of women was 4.9 years and that of the men 4.6 years. Although the women's average was slightly higher, the difference was not significant.

METHOD

Description of Sample

The sample consisted of 150 male and 150 female regular members of Southeastern Psychological Association whose names were taken from the 1972 membership list. Since there were 1,076 male members and 242 female members, it was necessary to select every 6th male from the list and approximately every 2nd female.

Survey Instrument

Each person in the sample was sent a one-page questionnaire (Appendix A) which asked, 1) for the date of their doctorate or terminal degree, 2) the area of specialization within psychology, and 3) for a chronological listing of all the jobs held since the terminal degree was obtained, listed from the

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first job to the current position. For each job change, space was provided for respondents to give all the reasons for which each change in employment was made. A covering letter on official SEPA's stationery asked each participant to provide the information requested and was signed by the President of the organization, Dr. Charles Spielberger. Deliberately, neither the sex of the individual, nor the name of the respondent was called for, the former because of the fear that individuals would be sensitized on the sex issue and in some way color their comments or simply fail to respond at all, and the latter because it was hoped that respondents would be honest and complete in their answers as to why they changed their jobs. In order to identify sex, females were sent forms utilizing elite type and the male form was typed in pica.

Procedure

The survey was mailed out in the first week of November, 1972. Because the response to the survey was good, it was not necessary to send a follow-up letter. There was a 47% return, with 72 females responding and 74 of the males.

RESULTS

Table 1 of your handout summarizes the information obtained from the completed questionnaires, broken down by sex. For females, the data is further broken down by degree with the non-Ph.D.s and the Ph.D.s shown separately in columns 1 and 2. This breakdown was not done for the men since all but two had earned the Ph.D. The areas of specialization, within psychology, were categorized into two general subheadings, Basic or Applied. Table 2A (page 2, handout) shows, by sex, the distribution of these areas broken down into more specific categories. As might be expected, a greater proportion of the women in the sample received their training in an applied area than men, although applied areas were named more often by both sexes.

Looking at Table 1 again, it can be seen that women reported a total of 189 and men a total of 179 jobs. Jobs were categorized into three major types - those in private and public agencies, (e.g., community mental health centers, mental health institutions, public school systems or private corporations), self-employment, (e.g., clinicians in private practice or industrial psychologists), academic institutions, both public or private universities, colleges or community colleges. Eighty-nine or 47% of the total number of jobs held by women were with agencies, while 54 or 30% of the total number of jobs men held were in agencies. A small frequency of self-employment was reported by both sexes, with only eight of the female jobs and two of the male jobs falling in this category. Ninety-two (or 48%) of the jobs that females held and 122 or (68%) of the jobs males held were in academic institutions. Thus, the women in this sample were more often employed in agencies or self-employed than the men, especially those women with the Master's degree. Table 2B describes the types of academic institutions in which the men and women in the sample worked. A chi square test revealed that there were significant differences between the sexes, in that men more often had positions in universities than women, and women more frequently had jobs in colleges or community colleges.

In order to describe mobility, a mobility score was computed for each respondent by dividing the total number of jobs he or she listed into the total number of years since the terminal degree. Since what is obtained by this operation is years per job, a better name for this score might be a job tenure score. The mobility scores ranged from .2 - 25 years/job. The scores were

averaged for all females combined and for all males. As you can see in Table 1, the men had a mean of 4.44 and the females a mean of 4.34 years per job, a difference which was not significant, with the value of t approximately zero ($t \simeq 0$, df,144). Women with Master's degrees showed larger average mobility scores (5.18 years) than either male or female Ph.D. holders.

In order to ascertain further whether or not there were any differences between the mobility scores of women and men in the sample, the distributions of each were compared. Table 3A depicts the frequency distribution of mobility indices of female vs. male. It can be seen in Table 3A that there were no gross apparent differences in the frequency of any one value.

In Table 3B, the actual number of jobs held by each woman and each man are compared. Again, although women held a greater number of jobs overall than men, there were no significant differences in the distribution of the number of jobs that both sexes have held. The median test chi square was less than 1.0. Seventeen females and 24 males were still in their first job, some for many years.

The question was posed as to whether or not mobility of psychologists who worked in agencies is any different from that of psychologists who work in academic institutions. (Refer to Table 3C.) The differences in mobility of men and women seems to be small within each category of employment. Therefore, the data for both sexes was combined. (See third column.) The mobility of persons employed in agencies (3.36 years) is somewhat greater than that of those working in academic institutions (4.83 years). The number of jobs involving self employment was too small to yield reliable results.

Since mobility is known to be related to age, the respondents were divided into groups within sex according to the age of their terminal degree. This measure had to be used since the actual age of the respondent had not been requested. For convenience, ten years was considered the breaking point for defining "new" vs. "old" degrees. The average mobility score was computed separately for females and males who had held their degrees nine years or less and for those who had held their degrees ten years or more. Forty-five females and 42 males were included in the "new" degree group. As can be seen if you turn back to Table 1, their mobility scores were 2.57 and 2.82 years, respectively. Twenty-seven females and 32 males had degrees ten years old or more, and the average mobility scores for these two groups were 7.29 and 6.55, respectively. Both scores were considerably higher for the old degree groups than for the new degree groups, as might be expected.

Another factor which has been shown to influence mobility has been the skill level of the jobs in question. In Table 4, the highest position held by each respondent is listed by sex. The most notable differences between men and women is in the number who hold the position of professor - only 8 women, but 27 men. Slightly more women obtained the rank of associate professor than men, since the rank of associate professor is considered terminal for many women. (This is in keeping with national figures which show that while only 50% of the women who had their doctorates for 20 years achieved the rank of full professor, the figure is 90% for men.) Also, fewer women held the rank of assistant professor than men in this sample. Otherwise, there were no important differences in the highest position earned in academia. Since a greater number of the women held non-academic positions than men, it is not surprising that a greater number of women reached positions in administration.

Finally, the 222 reasons given for changing jobs were analyzed. The number of reasons was smaller than the number of jobs since the first job reported by each respondent did not represent a change. Reasons were grouped into two major categories, "Professional Advancement" and all "Other" reasons. National surveys of mobility have shown that the majority of faculty moves result in advancement of some sort in the careers of the job changers. In the category, "Professional Advancement," was placed any reason describing an increment in salary, rank, prestige of the institution or improved opportunities for professional growth. As you can see at the bottom of Table 1, 50% of the reasons men gave, but only 36% of the reasons women gave, were categorized as professional advancement. This difference was significant at the $p < .05$ level (chi square = 4.78, 1 df). Thus, the data for the men, but not the women, resembled that obtained from national surveys.

The major types of reasons under the general heading "Other" are also given in Table 1 in order of frequency of occurrence. Under "Job Unsatisfactory" such reasons as "bored stiff," lack of opportunity to teach, unhappiness with the nature of the work, were included. More men than women gave these sorts of reasons. "Job Disappearance" refers to grants which ended, fellowships which expired, or adjunct monies being reduced. Here more women than men were affected. "Spouse Related" reasons would include the fact that spouses changed jobs or educational institutions or disliked the area and consequently relocated. This forced the individual to change jobs. Eighteen women and only one man reported reasons of this sort. Although this difference is great, 18 is still a small proportion (15%) of 117 total reasons given by women for changing employment. The category, "Termination," is self-explanatory. No differences are apparent between women and men in this regard. "Personal" reasons involved such things as poor health, dislike of climate or geographical area, divorce or pregnancy. Ten percent of the female and 3% of the male reasons fell into this category. The category "Personality Conflict" simply referred to the fact that the individual could not get along with his or her supervisor or colleagues. Women mentioned this only three times and men six.

The women with M.A.'s as opposed to those with Ph.D.'s were surprisingly similar in the reasons they gave for changing employers. Women with better credentials, who were thus better able to change jobs to improve their status, did not report moving to advance professionally any more often than those in a less favorable position to do so.

DISCUSSION

In sum, the major differences between the 72 women and 74 men in the sample were as follows:

1. More men had the doctorate degree than women, although women who belong to SEPA and who chose to respond to the questionnaire are probably more like men in this dimension than women in psychology in general. (Only 24% of the doctorates in psychology are earned by women.)

2. While both sexes specialized in an applied area more often than a basic area, this differential tendency was greater for women.

3. Women were more often employed by agencies than men, and women with M.A.'s were most likely to have this type of employment. A greater number of men held positions in universities, while a greater number of jobs women held were in colleges or community colleges.

4. The mobility of men and women was not significantly different. Women with Master's degrees were least mobile. The distributions of numbers of jobs held by men and women were highly similar also. However, mobility was related to the age of the degree.

5. The level of the highest position reported differed by sex. Men achieved the rank of full professor and positions of administration in the university more often than women and also held the rank of assistant professor more frequently.

6. Finally, men more often than women reported changing jobs in order to achieve professional advancement, or because of job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, women more often than men changed their jobs because it disappeared, their spouse moved, or because of pregnancy or ill health.

This study found that despite differences between women and men in training, type of employer, level of success achieved, and reasons for changing jobs, there were no significant differences in their job mobility. How then did the apparent myth that "women are a bad risk" start and what has maintained it? The answer to this is a matter for further study. What must be emphasized and publicized now is that the statement is false, not supported by the data collected in this study. Chairmen and directors may hire women with the confidence with which they hire men with respect to the likelihood that the women will remain in their jobs.

Table 1

SUMMARY JOB MOBILITY SURVEY

	FEMALES			MALES
	M.A.	Ph.D.or Ed.D.	Total	Total
N	16	56	72	74
M.A. Degree	16			2
Ph.D. or Ed.D.		56		72
Area of Degree				
Basic			17	30
Applied			51	44
No Area Given			4	0
Total Number of Jobs Held	43	146	189	179
Type Employer				
Agency	31 (67%)	58 (38%)	89 (47%)	54 (30%)
Self	2 (4%)	6 (4%)	8 (5%)	2 (2%)
Academic Institution	10 (21%)	82 (57%)	92 (48%)	122 (68%)
Average Mobility Score in Years - Overall	5.18	4.08	4.34	4.44
New Degree: 0-9 years	--	--	2.57 (N=45)	2.82 (N=42)
Old Degree: 10-more yrs.	--	--	7.29 (N=27)	6.55 (N=32)
Reasons Given for Change				
Professional Advancement	10 (36%)	32 (36%)	42 (36%)	53 (50%)
Other	[18][64%]	[57][64%]	[75][64%]	[52][50%]
Job Unsatisfactory	4 (14%)	12 (13%)	16 (14%)	23 (22%)
Job Disappears	5 (18%)	12 (13%)	17 (15%)	11 (10%)
Spouse Related	3 (11%)	15 (17%)	18 (15%)	1 (1%)
Termination	2 (7%)	7 (8%)	9 (8%)	7 (6%)
Personal	4 (14%)	8 (9%)	12 (10%)	4 (3%)
Personality Conflict	0 (0%)	3 (3%)	3 (3%)	6 (5%)

Table 2A

Area of Psychology

Basic	Female	Male
Experimental	4	9
Physiological	4	5
Personality/Social	2	6
Developmental	3	1
General	2	2
Research	2	2
Statistics & Learning	0	1
Comparative	0	2
Psychometrics	0	1
Basic - no area specified	0	1
	N = 17	N = 30
Applied		
Clinical	28	29
Counseling	7	3
School/Educational	12	7
Industrial	3	1
Applied -no area specified	1	4
	N = 51	N = 44
No Area Given	4	0

Table 2B

Type of Academic Institution

	Female	Male
Private University	6	21
State University	53	78
Private College	25	17
State College	4	3
Junior or Community College	4	3
	Total 92	122

Chi Square = 10.18, P $<.02$

Table 3A

Distribution of Mobility Scores

Mobility Score	Female	Male	
0 - 1	14	14	
1.1 - 2	13	8	
2.1 - 3	7	10	
3.1 - 4	10	14	(t = 0, df,144)
4.1 - 5	7	7	
5.1 - 10	19	18	
10.1 - 15	-	1	
15.1 - 20	-	2	
20.1 - 25	2	-	
	N = 72	N = 74	

Table 3B

Distribution of Jobs Held

Number of Jobs	Female	Male	
1	18	24	
2	25	24	
3	10	12	
4	8	8	(Chi Square <1.0)
5	5	2	
6	6	2	
7	-	1	
8	-	-	
9	-	-	
10	-	1	
	N = 72	N = 74	

Table 3C

Mobility by Type of Employer

Agency	Female	Male	Total Both Sexes
Number of Jobs	89	54	143
Average Years/Job	3.41	3.28	3.36
Self			
Number of Jobs	8	2	10
Average Years/Job	4.0	11.0	5.4
Academic			
Number of Jobs	92	122	214
Average Years/Job	4.41	5.14	4.83

Table 4

Highest Position Held

Academic Positions	Female	Male
University Administration (Directors, Deans, V.P.)	5	12
Chairman and Professor	2	4
Professor	8	27
Chairman and Associate Professor	1	2
Associate Professor	12	7
Assistant Professor	13	23
Instructor	4	0
Research Associate	1	1
Adjunct Professor	1	0
Faculty - no rank	1	0
Lecturer	0	1
Non-Academic Positions		
Administration (Chiefs, Directors, Supervisors,V.P.)	10	6
Staff (School Psychologist, Staff Psychologist, Consultant)	13	3
Private Practice	6	2